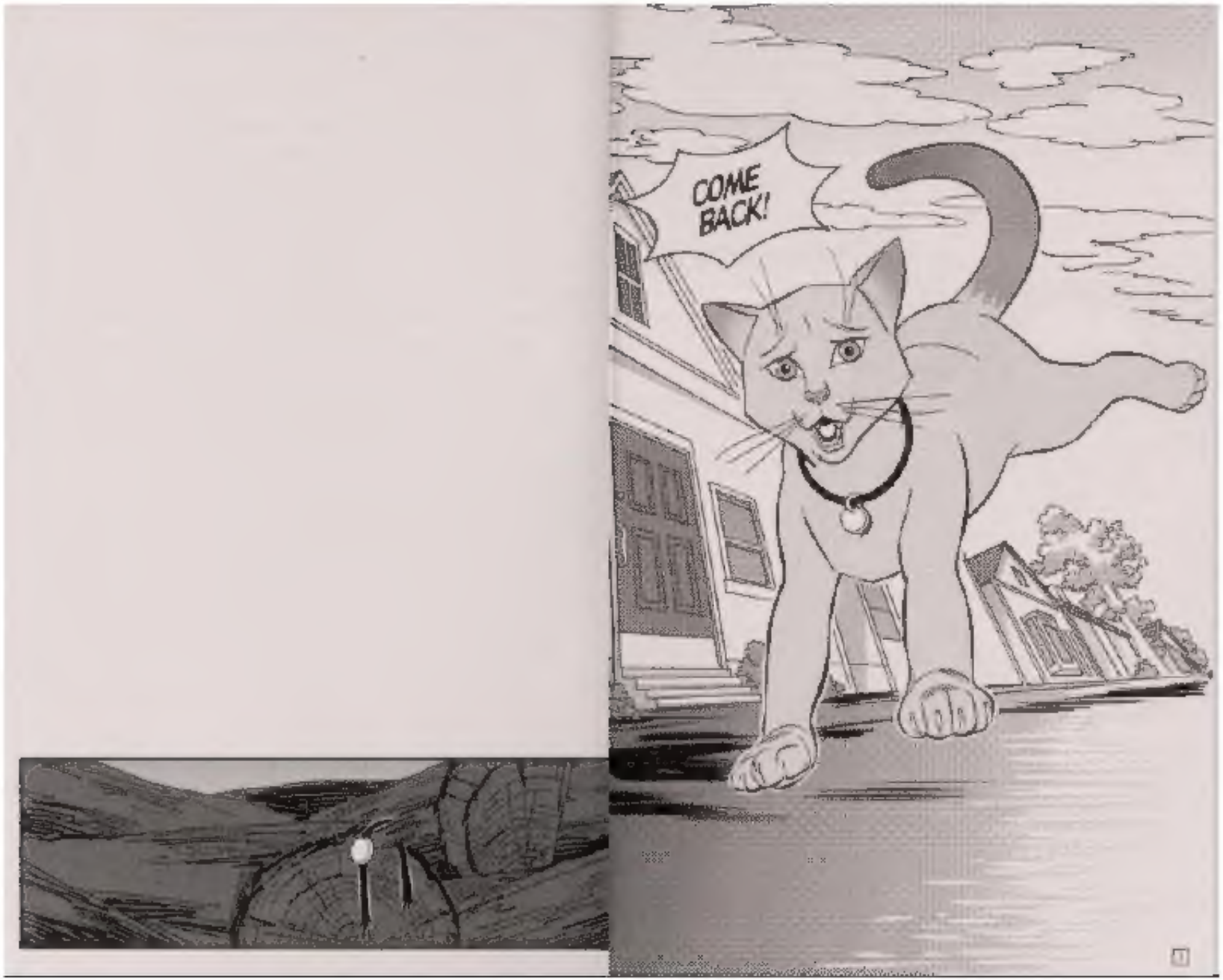
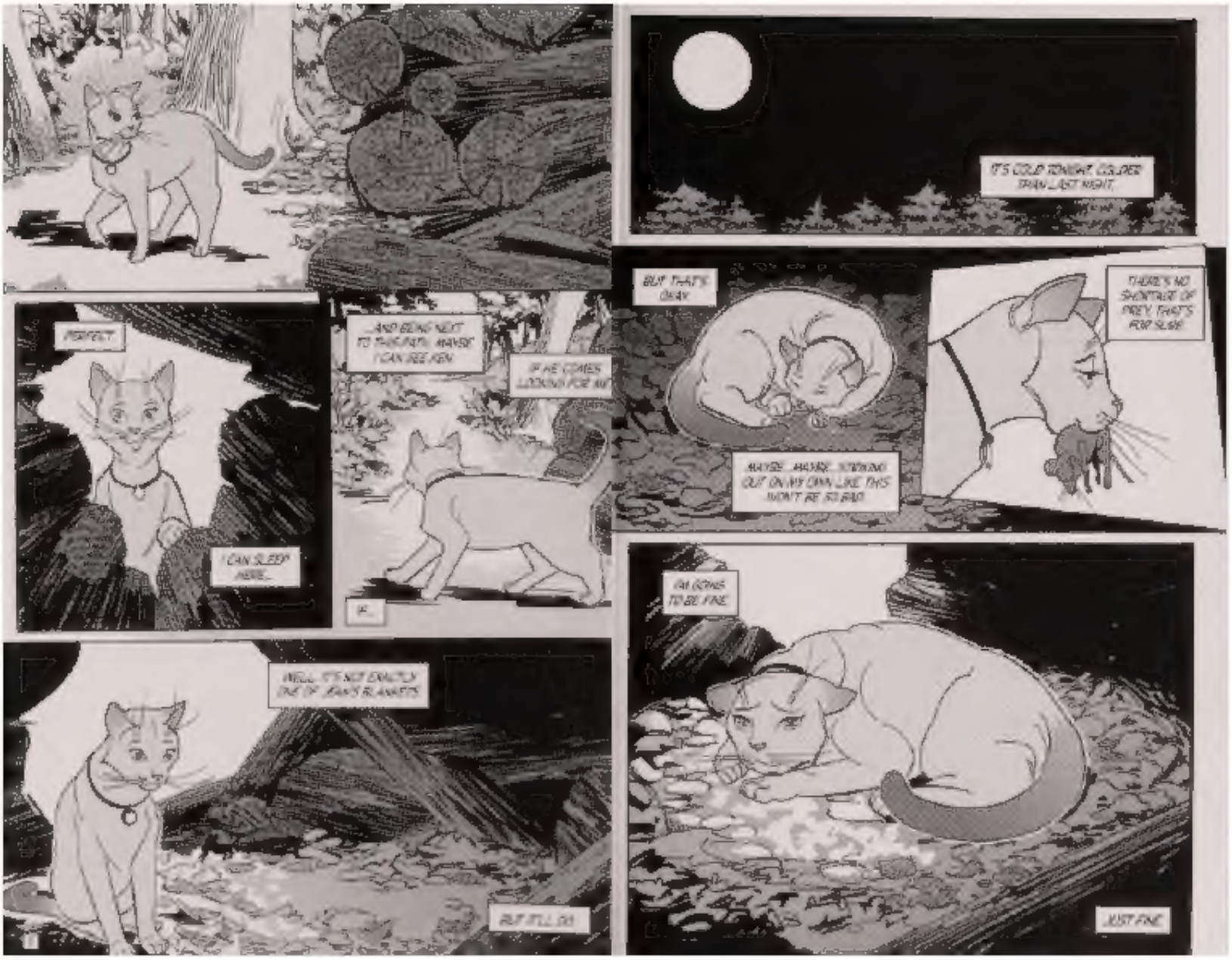

COME BACK!

DON'T LEAVE ME!
COME BACK... PLEASE...!
COME BACK
NO... NO!

MY WHOLE LIFE I LIVED WITH MY HOUSEFOLK
I NEVER REALLY KNEW WHAT THEY WERE SAYING EXACTLY BUT I KNOW THEIR NAMES
KEN AND JEAN
I SPENT EVERY DAY WITH THEM
AND THEN EVERY NIGHT THEY LET ME OUT SO I COULD EXPLORE
I DON'T THINK THEY KNEW ABOUT ALL THE TREES I CLIMBED THE SQUIRRELS I HUNTED THE FRIENDS I MADE
THEY JUST LOVED ME AND WANTED ME TO BE HAPPY
THEN JEAN GOT SICK
SHE GOT SO WEAK...SO FAST... AND I TRIED TO HELP I TRIED TO COMFORT HER THE BEST I COULD BUT NOTHING WORKED
THEN I CAME HOME ONE DAY
...AND SHE WAS GONE
OH, SASHA, WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO NOW?
DAYS AND NIGHTS WENT BY AND KEN STARTED GETTING WEAK TOO HE STOPPED GROOMING, AND HE WOULDN'T EAT
THEN THIS MORNING THESE HOUSEFOLK I'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE CAME AND TALKED TO HIM
...AND HE SHUT ME INSIDE THE HOUSE AND HE LEFT WITH THEM. HE EVEN LOCKED THE CAT DOOR. HE NEVER DOES THAT!
WHY IS HE GONE? WHEN IS HE COMING BACK?
WHY IS HE LEAVING ME BEHIND?

I SQUEEZED OUT A BATHROOM WINDOW AND RAN AFTER HIM, BUT I COULDN'T CATCH HIM NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRIED.
NOW I GUESS THE ONLY THING I CAN DO IS WAIT. JUST WATCH THE HOUSE, AND WAIT TILL HE COMES BACK FOR ME.
I CAN'T GET INSIDE THE HOUSE. THE WINDOW'S CLOSED NOW, BUT... I DON'T REALLY WANT TO GET INSIDE.
BUT WHERE DO I GO NOW?
NOT IF KEN'S NOT THERE.
HI SASHA! HOW ARE YOU TODAY?
THAT'S MY FRIEND SHNUKY, WITH ONE OF HER HOUSEFOLK.
I ALMOST WALK ON BY WITHOUT ANSWERING HER.
TING TING
THE NIGHT GETS COLD. AWFULLY COLD, AND IT TAKES ME TILL JUST BEFORE THE SUN RISES TO REALIZE.
KEN'S PROBABLY NOT COMING BACK.
NOT SO GREAT, SHNUKY. MY... THE... MY LAST HOUSEFOLK IS GONE NOW.
SASHA, I'M SO SORRY!
OH, YOU KNOW WHAT YOU COULD DO? YOU COULD LIVE WITH US! MY HOUSEFOLK ALREADY LOVE YOU, Y'KNOW!
THANKS... BUT NO THANKS. I WANT MY OWN HOUSEFOLK BACK.
I'M NOT READY TO HAVE NEW ONES. I'D RATHER JUST BE ON MY OWN FOR A WHILE.
OH, O-OKAY. WELL, COME BACK AND VISIT ALL RIGHT?

I DON'T EVEN MEAN TO HEAD FOR THE WOODS. I JUST SORT OF END UP THERE.
I NEVER REALISE THAT IS THE ONLY OTHER PLACE I'VE EVER BEEN HAPPY.
OOH, IS THAT A MOUSE?
HOW DO I TAKE CARE OF MYSELF?
EEK! THAT'S NOT WAY TO SLEEP!
IF I'M GOING TO DO THIS I'VE GOT TO FIND A PLACE OF MY OWN.
THE MOUSE IS DELICIOUS.
THAT HELPS A LITTLE.
BUT EVEN AS I'M FALLING ASLEEP I CAN'T HELP THINKING ABOUT HER.
WHERE IS HE?
HOW AM I GOING TO GET ALONG WITHOUT HIM?
SOMEWHERE I CAN MAKE AT LEAST A LITTLE COSY.


PERFECT
I CAN SLEEP HERE
...AND BEING NEXT TO THIS GATE, WHERE I CAN SEE KEN
IF HE COMES LOOKING FOR ME
IT'S COLD TONIGHT, COLDER THAN LAST NIGHT
BUT THAT'S OKAY
THERE'S NO SHORTAGE OF PREY THAT'S FOR SURE
MAYBE... MAYBE SOMEHOW OUT ON MY OWN, LIKE THIS WON'T BE SO BAD
I'M GOING TO BE FINE
JUST FINE
WELL, IT'S NOT EXACTLY THE OL' JEAN BLANKETS
BUT STILL OK!

NEXT MORNING, NEXT MOUSE. I'VE ALWAYS BEEN PRETTY GOOD AT HUNTING BUT I THINK I'M GETTING EVEN BETTER NOW.
JUST A LITTLE... BIT FARTHER.
RAWWR!
HSSS!
GET BACK! MY MOUSE!
OH, I'M SO SORRY! I DIDN'T REALIZE YOU WERE STALKING IT TOO!
PLEASE, FORGIVE ME. I MEANT NO HARM!
WELL... HUH.
I GUESS I COULD SHARE IT WITH YOU.
MY NAME'S PINE. WHAT'S YOURS?
I'M SASHA.
I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU AROUND BEFORE, SASHA.
NO, I JUST GOT HERE.
I MADE MYSELF A DEN OVER NEAR THE PATH.
DEN? WHY WOULD YOU NEED A DEN? YOU'RE A KITTYPET!
I DON'T KNOW THIS WORD "KITTYPET." PINE SAYS KITTYPETS LIVE IN HOUSES WITH HOUSEFOLK. HE CALLS THEM "TWOLEGS."
I TELL HIM WHAT HAPPENED TO JEAN AND KEN, AND I TELL HIM I'M NOT A KITTYPET ANYMORE.
HE'S NOT EXACTLY WHAT YOU'D CALL SYMPATHETIC.
WELL, TIME TO MOVE ON, THEN!
YOU NEED TO GET RID OF THAT COLLAR.
MY COLLAR? WHY?
BECAUSE ONLY KITTYPETS WEAR COLLARS. IF YOU'RE GOING TO LIVE IN THE WOODS, THE COLLAR'S GOT TO GO. HERE, I'LL HELP.

I DON'T TRY TO STOP HIM
BUT PART OF ME WISHES I HAD
JUST HOLD STILL. ALMOST GOT IT
THERE
NOW YOU LOOK LIKE A ROGUE
WHAT'S A ROGUE?
IT'S WHAT THE CLAN CATS CALL THOSE OF US WHO DON'T FOLLOW THEIR RULES
I'M SORRY, OH CHOSEN ONE. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "CLANS"?
GROUPS OF WILD CATS OUT IN THE FOREST. THEY LIVE PAST THAT CROOKED TREE
EACH CLAN HAS ITS OWN SECTION OF THE WOODS AND ONLY THEY CAN HUNT THERE. THEY'LL FIGHT ANYBODY TO KEEP 'EM OUT
CLAN CATS ARE FIERCE. LET ME TELL YOU. SEE THESE SCARS? I KNOW FIRSTHAND HOW FIERCE THEY ARE
YOU BE CAREFUL OF THE CLANS, SASHA
THEY DON'T THINK MUCH OF KITTYPETS

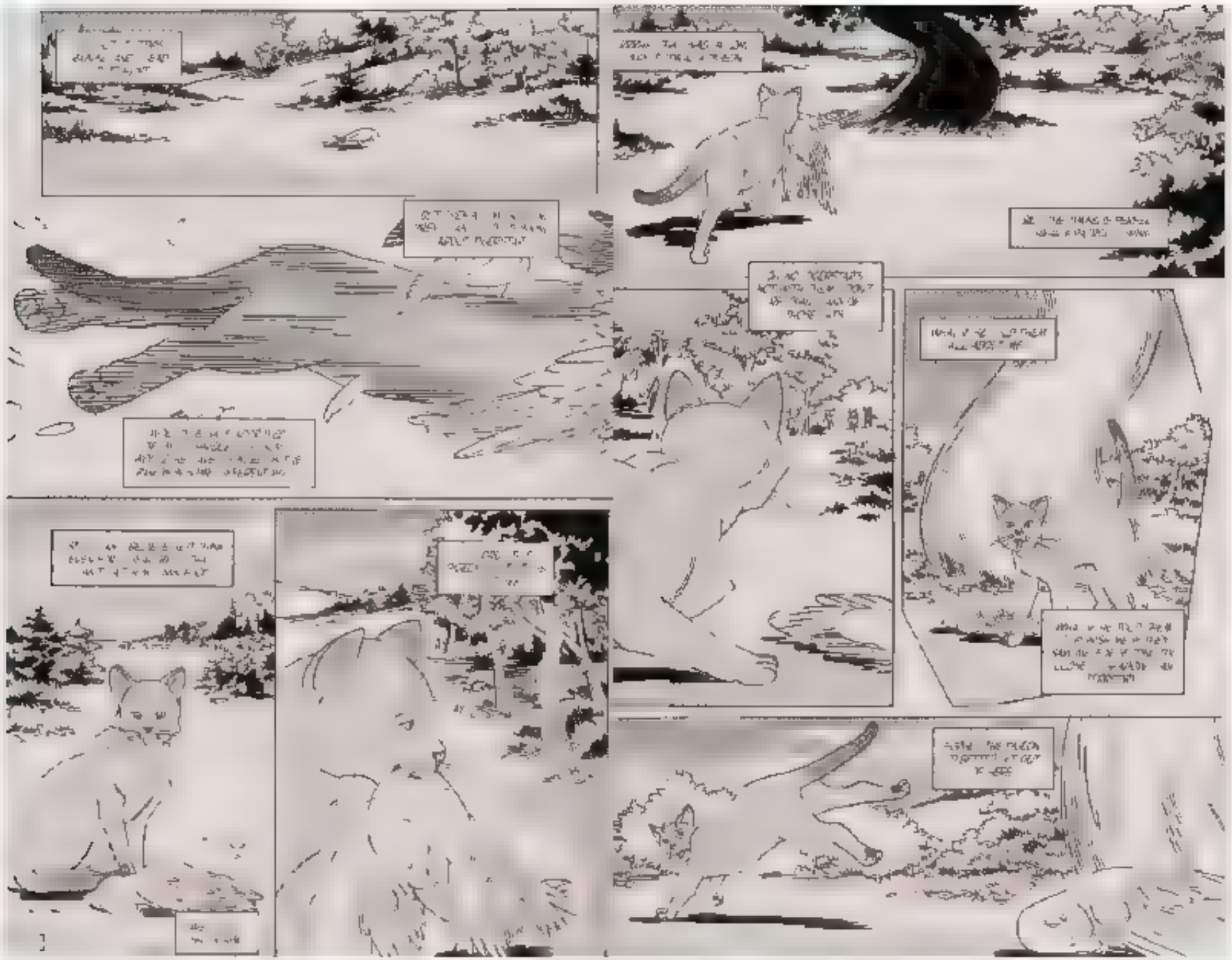
JEAN AND KEN GAVE ME THAT COLLAR. I'M NOT READY TO SWEAR IF AWAY JUST YET.
WELL, IF THERE ARE CLAN CATS AROUND HERE, I WANT TO SEE THEM.
AND I'M PLENTY PATIENT. I'LL WAIT AS LONG AS I HAVE TO.
BUT COLLARS ASIDE. I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT WHAT PINE SAID... ABOUT THESE CLANS.
WOW. I'VE NEVER SMELLED SO MANY DIFFERENT CATS.
BEFORE I KNOW IT, I'M OUT AT THE CROOKED TREE.
AND THEN HERE. THE SCENT IS SO STRONG.
I UNDERSTAND IN A FLASH.
THIS IS A BORDER. A BORDER TO ONE OF THE TERRITORIES PINE WAS TALKING ABOUT.
WHAT A TERRIBLE NIGHT.
MAYBE THIS WAS A STUPID IDEA. MAYBE NOBODY SEES THESE CLAN CATS. MAYBE THEY'RE NOT REAL.
MAYBE THEY'RE GONE.

MAYBE I'LL JUST SIT RIGHT HERE AND BE QUIET HERE
IT'S FOX TIGERSTAR IT'S FOX
THE HANDSOME CAT IS CALLED TIGERSTAR HOW DRAMATIC!
VERY GOOD THE SCENT SLIGHT WASHED MOSTLY AWAY BY A LIGHT RAIN YET ROWANPAW DETECTED IT EASILY
YOU'VE TAUGHT YOUR APPRENTICE WELL ASKED FOX
THANK YOU TIGERSTAR
CONTINUE THE PATROL
THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THIS BIG SPECIAL CAT...
I WATCH AS THEY MARK THEIR SCENT
ROWANPAW
WHAT OTHER SCENTS CAN YOU PICK UP APPRENTICE?
THEN THE BIG HANDSOME ONE STARTS TALKING
SCENTS SCENTS UH NO WHAT IF THEY CAN SMELL ME?
THE FOX IS NO THREAT TO US
AS YOU WISH
I JUST CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF HIM!

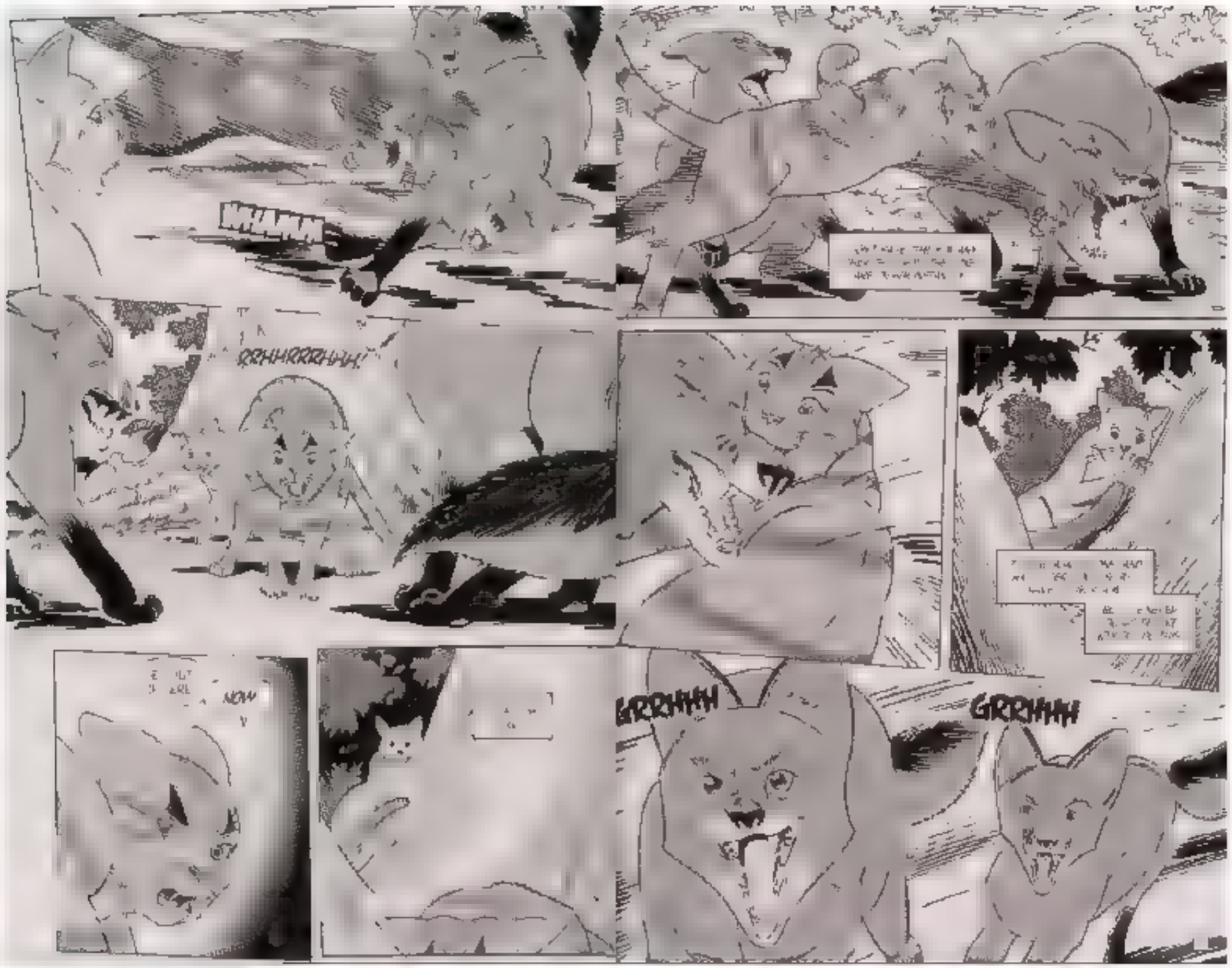
RRHARH!
CRUNCH!

OH!
YOU
MAYBE

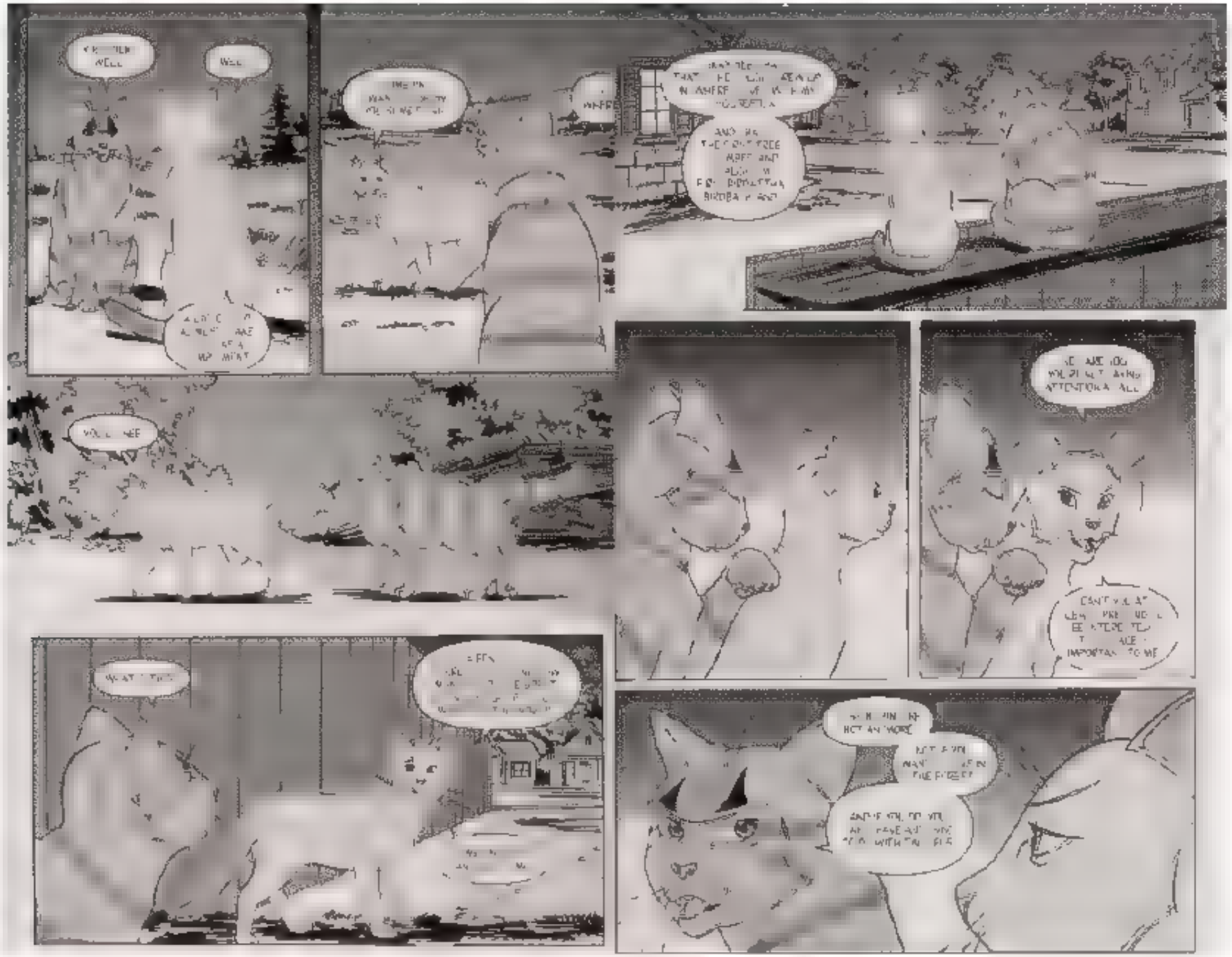
HEY



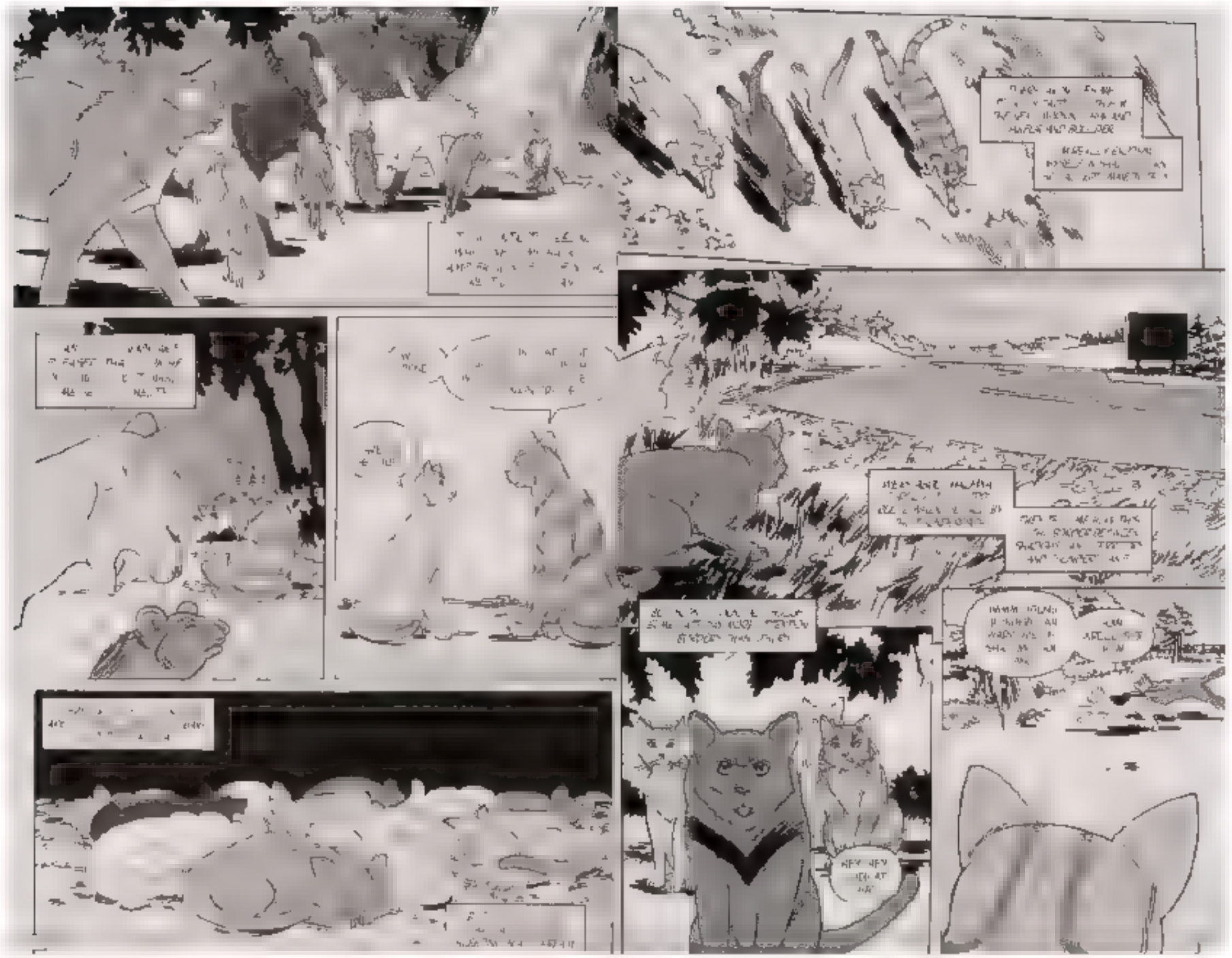
MINE YOU
NO.


GRRHHRRRHHH!
NOW
GRRHHH
GRRHHH

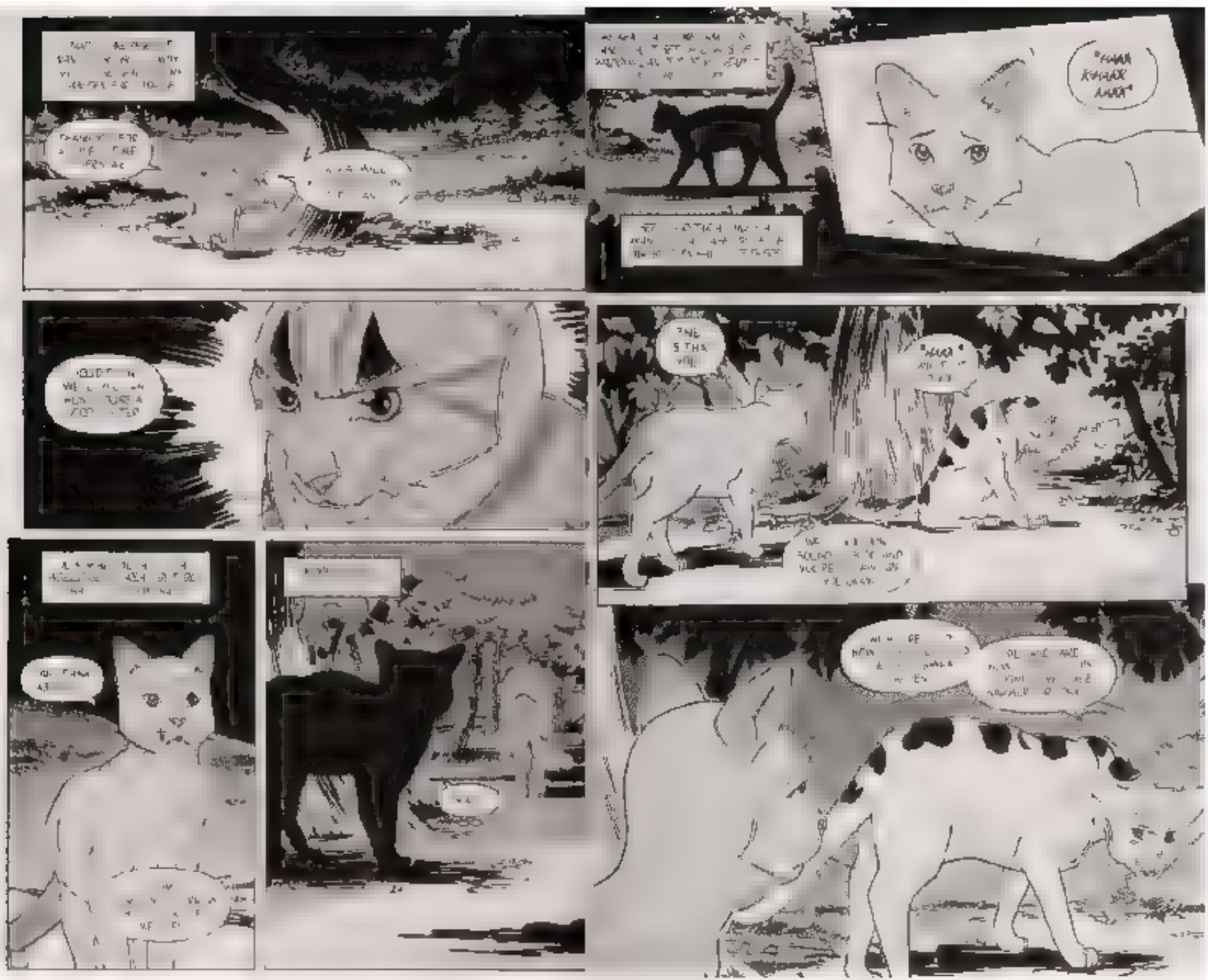
BRAAOWRRH!



THERE'S NO NEED
EVER



TRAITOR!



THERE'S NO MORE TIME TO DELAY. WAR IS UPON THE CLANS, AND EVERY WARRIOR AND QUEEN MUST BE PREPARED TO FIGHT.
SCOURGE OF BLOODCLAN HAS AGREED TO UNITE WITH US. THE NEXT STEP IS TO TAKE OVER RIVERCLAN.
LEOPARDSTAR IS TOO WEAK TO STOP ME. SHE KNOWS I AM THE STRONGEST CAT IN THE WHOLE FOREST.
AND SOON I WILL RULE ALL THE CLANS.
WHAT ABOUT FIRESTAR?
HA HA HA. THUNDERCLAN WON'T BE A PROBLEM.
I HAVE A PLAN TO LURE A PACK OF DOGS INTO THEIR CAMP.
THEN WE'LL BE RID OF THAT FILTHY KITTYPET FIRESTAR AND HIS C...KA OF KITTYPETS AND HALF-BREEDS ONCE AND FOR ALL.
AND THEN FIRESTAR...
...SHALL RULE...
...EVERYTHING.

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
I'VE GOT TO GET AWAY FROM HERE!
WHAT WAS THAT?
FASTER! FASTER! GO FASTER!
ONLY WHEN I'M SURE NO ONE'S FOLLOWING ME DO I LET MYSELF SLOW DOWN ENOUGH TO THINK.
TIGERSTAR LIED TO ME! HE'S THE ENEMY OF THE FOREST, NOT FIRESTAR!
AND IT'S NOT A CLAN HE WANTS ME TO JOIN, EITHER! IT'S AN ARMY, AN ARMY THAT'LL FIGHT AGAINST KITTYPETS.
CAN TIGERSTAR EVER LIVE ME? I USED TO BE A KITTYPET. WHAT IF HE LOVES ALL THIS POWER AND BLOODSHED MORE THAN ME?
IS IT MY DESTINY TO BE ALONE?
SASHA...
DO YOU HAVE AN ANSWER FOR ME?

To Be Continued..